



Housing Strategy Group

Held: Wednesday 8th April, 1000-1230 hours
Phoenix House

Minutes

Present:

Tony Oram (Chair) (TO)	Strategy Manager, DAAT
Allan Cooper (AC)	Deputy Manager, TADS
Ben Curran (BC)	Team Manager, Outreach, Julian Housing
Steven Ford (SF)	Great Yarmouth Borough Council
Claire Leborgne (CL)	Strategic Housing Manager, Norfolk Probation Area
Chris Hancock (CH)	Housing Strategy Officer, Norwich City Council
Karen Lester (Mins)	PA to Strategy Manager, DAAT
Richard Price (RP)	Drug Availability Liaison Officer, Norfolk Constabulary
Lisa Prior (LP)	Senior Substance Misuse Worker (Housing Pathways), NORCAS
Emma Smith (ES)	Housing Strategy Officer, Norwich City Council
Katie Smith (KS)	Supported Housing Manager, Merchants Terrace
Darrell Yaxley (DY)	Acting Service Manager, Homeless Outreach, NORCAS

Apologies:

Lesley Caines (LC)	Herring House Trust
Gaynor Collin (GC)	Herring House Trust
Rob Cooper (RC)	Planning Officer, Supporting People
Lorraine Douglas (LD)	Principle Officer Housing Needs, KLWNBC
John Hales (JH)	Operations Manager, St Martins Housing
Polly Kane (PK)	Strategy Officer, NOAF
Stephanie Ross –Wagenknecht (SRW)	Finance & Administration Manager, DAAT

Item	Subject
1.	<p>Declaration of Interest (<i>if required</i>). There were none.</p> <p>Apologies for absence and introductions. As above</p>
2.	<p>Acceptance of minutes from previous meetings of the 11th February 2009 (including any confirmation of any part of the minutes exempt under the FoI Act)</p> <p>Minutes were accepted as a true and accurate record, with the following changes:</p> <p>TO confirmed YPJCG did sign off on the young peoples elements of work plan.</p> <p>TO gave update on YPIG on targeted age range for 16/17/18, which they felt was the better target range to focus on. SF confirmed this was the case.</p> <p>CL YOT Youth Housing strategy is being relooked at, date of completion to be confirmed.</p>

	All accurate apart from changes.
3.	<p>Matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting held on 11th February 2009:</p> <p>RP reported that LD had produced a paper on homelessness and migrant workers. RP has forwarded this to Tony Cherington at Norfolk Constabulary, to progress at operational command level.</p> <p>SF announced that the Safe Surrender scheme was adopted by Homeselect for Great Yarmouth & Waveney on 2nd April 2009.</p> <p>TO referred to dates of forums, of which he has little information.</p> <p>CBW5 of the HSG Work plan. The meeting has been re-scheduled for the end of April.</p> <p>DAG1 of the HSG Work plan. This is in progress. Mike Hutchinson and Veronica Nelhams are aware of the training needs.</p> <p>The group discussed the funding which came directly from the PCT, for alcohol briefing training courses. KS said the training was good. RP discussed the other provisional dates in place for this training, which are in October and November. BC to add this information into his document.</p> <p>Action: BC to add alcohol briefing training course dates into his document.</p> <p>RP updated the group on the next N-DAP newsletter, which is currently in progress.</p> <p>Action: KL to ensure the HSG group are on the N-DAP mailing list, in order to receive future copies of the NDAP newsletter.</p>
4.	<p>'Safe Surrender' – re-housing for young offenders (paper, Lorraine Douglas)</p> <p>LD sent her apologies for this meeting.</p> <p>SF summarised the policy. The Safe surrender policy is for an offender who has committed a single offence or has been given a long-term prison sentence, comprising of 6mths or more. Housing benefits for those offenders falling into this category, cover absence for 13 weeks maximum, and not the duration of their prison sentence. After 13 weeks the property would be surrendered followed by repossession. Once the offender has completed their prison sentence, they have arrears to pay on the property due to their absence, with no accommodation available. There are small numbers of people who fall into this category, but there is a real need to have this policy in place. The policy would protect the offender by surrendering the property, and enabling them to return at a later date. The same policy would apply to those seeking resettlement accommodation, with no penalties to incur for a separate system. This was originally piloted in Kings Lynn, and has proved successful. The group discussed how the system would work. SF said a resettlement form has been developed, which would be implemented on prison release for offender, to establish if clients needed resettlement or independent housing.</p> <p>KS said this policy would have an impact on her team, due to many issues including long waiting lists. KS said she did not feel she would implement this policy as yet, due to offenders her team are working with, who are in breach of their tenancy agreements, i.e, for using drugs and dealing from their properties. SF said it would be more appropriate to go via the resettlement scheme. CL said everyone is in agreement with this process, as it deals with individuals long-term, before they reach crisis point.</p>
5.	<p>Housing and Substance Misuse Pathways Officer – meet and greet</p> <p>TO introduced Lisa Prior (LP), the newly appointed HSMPO, NORCAS. Lisa Prior gave an overview of her experience, which included; sourcing ways to reduce homelessness for young people, and producing housing guides for young people, including recommendations on housing options. LP has previously worked with St Matthews Housing for outreach and homelessness, but not so much on substance misuse. LP said she is fully aware of the</p>

training needs for staff who work in hostels.

CL discussed identifying staff training needs and suggested that LP and KS should speak further on this. KS mentioned the issues involved on implementing staff training, and how managers either adopt or dismiss the training needs, depending on the workload of the team.

TO discussed the 'war on drugs' and how it could be misread as a war on people taking drugs. TO said he is keen on defining the process for substance misusers seeking accommodation through the treatment journey, via a single point of contact. KS noted that the process has deteriorated, due to many services being streamlined, and only sub-standard accommodation being available. SF identified a training need for staff implementing the penalty process to allocate housing, used outside of the legislative framework. SF said he has seen applicants allocated accommodation on achieving a low criteria rating, who have subsequently damaged their accommodation within 2-3 months. SF stated that a multi-agency panel would be useful. SF said he currently has a home assessment panel, which meets on a bi-weekly basis and gives more scope for agencies to put in a support plan. This panel includes representatives from Children's Services', Adult Social Services, Shelter, plus others.

6. **Delivering the Housing Strategy Group work plan** (including RAGging, paper, Tony Oram)

CBW 2

CL discussed what the group have learnt in 3-6mths following the changes. Suggestion of feedback forms possibly sent in a short email format with tick boxes. TO discussed using Survey Monkey as an alternative, which would be a useful tool to enable change and feedback, which is a good platform to build on.

Action: All to review ideas for capturing feedback data.

TO suggested having all meetings in one place, and a conference as a possible option. CL noted that there has not been one here for 12mths. All agreed on the concept of a conference in the Spring of next year, with a possible workshop and break out sessions. SF discussed crime and punishment, which would be high on an agenda, which could link into other current issues. CL noted an idea of service users as a theme for the next conference.

Action: TO asked LP to formalise sub-group, of which TO will be involved.

CBW 3 & 4

TO reported that the timetable has changed from April to March 2010.

TO discussed a half-day meeting, and possibly using the housing needs assessment for next conference. TO may leave CBW 4 out of the plan in order to concentrate on the Substance Misuse Housing Strategy for Norfolk. This item will change to read SMHS 1.

CBW 5

TO discussed the needs assessment and that CH, ES and LP would be working on this. TO noted the possibility of a conference launch.

DAG 1

TO referred to the Outreach Guide produced by BC, and asked if the group were happy to implement this. The final draft would be produced in August and published on 24th September. All agreed to adopt the Outreach guide. TO and RP said this was an excellent piece of work produced by BC.

DAG 2

TO gave an overview of DAG 2. KS agreed this is important for 16/17yrs, and clarity is needed for this young people's service. TO reported that Karen Hill, North Norfolk District Council is the appropriate contact to refer to, regarding housing and young people with substance misuse problems, or families with substance misuse problems. Karen leads on

	<p>this aspect of the Supporting People programme. RP asked how we link people with complex housing issues, of which SF replied that each area will have a youth homelessness forum, including people working on the ground. CL discussed the need for a limited one-page document, giving clear guidance for young people with substance misuse problems.</p> <p>All agreed a workshop concept was a good idea. CL said this should include Karen Hill and Alison Spalding</p> <p>Action: LP to speak to Karen Hill to ask for advice and knowledge of protocol.</p> <p>All agreed that a form of consultation should be initiated, with ideas needed on implementation. SF discussed working closer with youth homelessness forums, which also provided statistics.</p> <p>Action: LP to attend youth homelessness forums and provide a proposal to the group at the June meeting.</p> <p>YP 1 & 2</p> <p>TO confirmed that YP 1 and 2 are in progress. DY asked at what point would a young people's substance misuse representative be present? AC replied that he would arrange for one of his substance misuse officers to attend a future meeting.</p> <p>Action: AC to arrange for a substance misuse officer to attend a future HSG meeting.</p>
7.	<p>Next meeting: Capital programme – Workshop session on spend proposals: how does HSG want to do this?</p> <p>CL reported that RC would bring an update on work in the pipeline to the next meeting. TO confirmed to KS that nothing has surfaced out of the treatment planning days, but that ideas should reflect the findings of the housing needs assessment work undertaken so far.</p> <p>RP requested a separate meeting to review how the 94k is spent. SF suggested to either have one large project across the county or smaller ones added to other programmes. Ideally his preference would be to have one project, across the county. CL gave her opinion that it should be based on need, as it may not work if divided into individual pots.</p>
8.	<p>Update on issues facing members of HSG</p> <p>To be discussed at the next meeting.</p>
9.	<p>Any other business</p> <p>CL gave heartfelt thanks to TO for chairing the NOAF conference recently. CL has obtained excellent feedback, and the conference as a whole was well received.</p> <p>KS reported that she had approval for 1 person to be funded by the DAT.</p> <p>Action: TO to organise scones and strawberries for the June meeting</p>
10.	<p>Date, time and venue of next meeting</p> <p>Wednesday, 10th June 2009 (1000 – 1230 hours)</p>

Copies of Minutes and papers can be obtained from:-

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